THE MILITANT

Socialist Workers Party
National Committee statement

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Demand Washington end its economic war on Cuba! Now!

The following statement was released Oct. 11 by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party.

The Socialist Workers Party demands that the U.S. government end its 63-year-long economic, trade, and financial war against the people of Cuba. Immediately. No strings attached.

This brutal policy has been carried out by *every one* of the 13 Democratic and Republican administrations since 1959. The U.S. rulers' aim has been to crush the spirit of Cuba's working people, the socialist revolution they made and have defended for more than six decades, and the example it sets for toilers in the United States, across the Americas and worldwide.

The cumulative toll of this all-encompassing imperialist assault is magnified in recent weeks by the effects of Hurricane Ian, which damaged or demolished tens of thousands of homes and farms in western Pinar del Río and Artemisa provinces, contaminated water supplies, and plunged most of the country into darkness for more than a day.

This made-in-Washington social disaster comes on top of the raging petroleum fire Aug. 5 in Matanzas, which destroyed half the storage capacity at Cuba's largest oil distribution facility. Due to longstanding trade bans and suffocating international banking sanctions, Cubans continue to face severe shortages of medicine and medical supplies, fuel and other vital necessities. The impact of these imperialist measures is multiplied by exploding prices, rising interest rates, and stagflation due to world capitalism's production and trade crisis, as well as by the consequences of the COVID pandemic and Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

For working people and our allies in the United States — the imperialist powerhouse of this unrelenting assault — there could be no more urgent time for every opponent of Washington's embargo to demand of the Biden White House and Congress: End the economic war against Cuba NOW! Every aspect of it. And forswear its reimposition!

There could be no better moment to explain the facts and win growing numbers of working people and youth to this decisive political battle.

Instead, the New York-based People's Forum placed a full-page "Urgent Appeal to President Biden" in the Oct. 2 Sunday edition of the *New York Times* begging the Biden administration to *suspend* the embargo, "*even if just for the next six months*, to purchase the necessary construction materials to REBUILD" [italics added].

What a betrayal of the elementary obligation of those of us here in the United States who oppose Washington's assault on Cuban sovereignty. What a betrayal of the interests of working people on both sides of the Florida Straits.

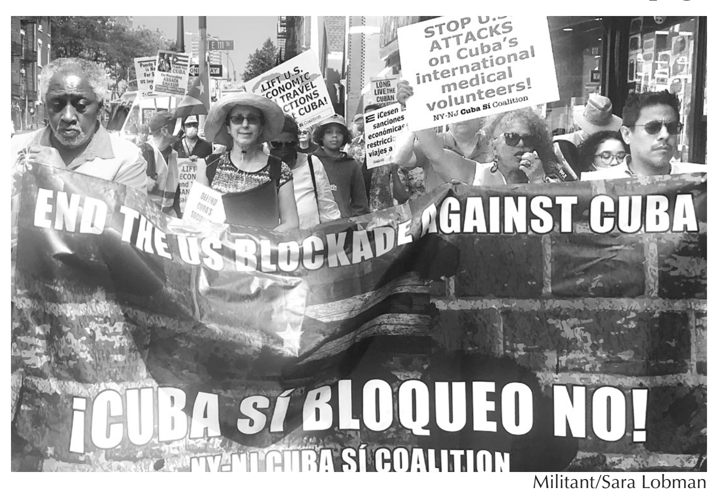
Whatever our views on other issues, now is the time to come together in calling on Washington to immediately and unconditionally *end* the embargo. Not lift it for a few months. Not make it a bit more bearable, before the U.S. rulers again inflict it. *End it!*

For those living in the U.S. to demand anything short of that lends political legitimacy to Washington's decadeslong economic war against the Cuban Revolution. We demand that the U.S. government halt every diplomatic and political manifestation of that hostile course as well.

The U.S. imperialist rulers and their two political parties don't need advice on *how* to do so. They don't need lessons on the deaths and destruction caused by the embargo — *that's the rulers' aim,* and has been for more than six decades. As the State Department's infamous "Mallory memorandum" put it in April 1960: "The majority of Cubans support" the revolution. For the U.S. government, therefore, the necessary state policy must be one that "makes the greatest inroads in denying money and supplies to Cuba, to decrease monetary and real wages, to bring about hunger, desperation and overthrow of [the] government."

Cuban workers and farmers in arms rapidly put to rest Washington's goal of instigating the "overthrow of the government." Those efforts by the U.S. rulers were dealt lasting political and military blows in April 1961 by the defeat of U.S.-organized mercenaries during the Bay of Pigs invasion

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Militant/Sara Lobman

March by New York-New Jersey Cuba Sí coalition in New York's Harlem neighborhood Aug. 28, demands complete end to U.S. rulers' economic, financial and trade embargo against Cuba.

at the hands of Cuba's revolutionary militias, armed forces and police. At a mobilization of hundreds of thousands in Havana to prepare to crush that aggression, Fidel Castro confirmed what Cuban toilers' own class-struggle experience had already taught them. "This is the socialist and democratic revolution of the working people, by the working people, and for the working people," Fidel said. "And for this revolution, we are prepared to give our lives."

Addressing President Biden, the People's Forum pleads: "The people of Cuba are part of our family — the human family. Don't let outdated Cold War politics prevent peace-loving people from helping the Cubans to rebuild. … The United States loses nothing by being a good neighbor and allowing Cuba to recover fully from this tragic moment."

LET CUBA REBUILD
URGENT APPEAL TO PRESIDENT BIDEN

The US sanctions and embargo are preventing Cuba from rebuilding after Hurricane Ian.

The Biden Administration needs to act right now to help the Cuban people. Hurricane Ian caused great devastation. The power grid was damaged, and the electrical system collapsed. Over four thousand homes have been completely destroyed or badly damaged.

Cuba must be allowed, even if just for the next six months, to purchase the necessary construction materials to REBUILD. Cubans are facing a major setback because of Hurricane Ian.

Despite Cuba's well-known preparedness for natural disasters, the damage from this hurricane has been immense. In the western province of Pinar del Rio, famous for its tobacco production, over 5,000 farms were destroyed. In small towns like San Luis, 80% of all homes were left damaged.

Despite previous assurances by the U.S. Embassy in Havana that the law authorizes U.S. entities and organizations to provide disaster relief and response, it's proven not so easy. For many organizations wanting to send aid to the island urgently, there are long, complex processes to receive licenses that often require expensive lawyers. Also, Cuba's inclusion in the State Sponsors of Terrorism List means that banks in both the United States and abroad are reluctant to process any transactions, including humanitarian donations. The Trump administration absurdly placed Cuba on the State Sponsors of Terrorism list simply for hosting the internationally recognized peace talks for Colombia.

It is unconscionable at this critical hour to maintain the embargo and engage in collective punishment against an entire people by preventing Cuba from purchasing construction materials or receiving aid.

President Biden, put Cold War politics aside — even for six months!

The people of Cuba are part of our family — the human family. Don't let outdated Cold War politics prevent peace-loving people from helping the Cubans to rebuild and return to their homes, rebuild the electrical grid, and have clean drinking water and access to food. The time to act is now!

Cuba is our neighbor. The United States loses nothing by being a good neighbor and allowing Cuba to recover fully from this tragic moment.

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OVER 50,000 HOMES WERE DESTROYED BY HURRICANE IAN. REBUILDING BEGINS NOW, BUT THE U.S. EMBARGO ON CUBA MAKES IT AN UPHILL BATTLE. LET'S HELP OUR NEIGHBORS!

Opponents of Washington's economic war on Cuba here in the U.S., unlike *New York Times* ad above, must not give even a tip of their finger to any infringement of Cuba's sovereignty.

But there's no such thing as a politically homogeneous "United States"; it's class divided. Unlike working people in this country, the propertied ruling families represented by the imperialist Democratic and Republican parties *have a great deal to lose* by "allowing Cuba to recover." That's why the Biden White House has doubled down on the most punishing package of sanctions yet imposed on Cuba. The capitalists hope their decades-long inhumane policy is working.

Their actions — ever since the subjugation of Cuba during the Spanish-American War — prove they don't care about "the human family." They care about raising profit rates and intensifying the exploitation of working people, whatever the consequences for *our* families. And Washington's course has nothing to do with "outdated Cold War politics." It has to do with Cuba's socialist revolution: with the example set by the workers and farmers who made that revolution and defend it to this day.

The U.S. rulers are determined to bury that revolution in a mountain of lies and smother any political interest among workers and farmers in emulating what our brothers and sisters in Cuba have achieved. It's what the bosses try to do to every strike and struggle by working people in the U.S.

Their hatred — and fear — of the working people of Cuba is in fact an extension of their contempt for workers here fighting to defend our constitutional freedoms against assaults by the White House, the FBI, and other institutions of repression of the capitalist state. Their fear of rail workers, coal miners, bakery workers, and other working people organizing to strengthen our trade unions as we fight for safe job conditions, for wages that grow faster than inflation, and for shorter hours that enable us to share in the lives of our families and take part in union and political activity. Their contempt for tens of millions fighting exploitation, the oppression of African Americans and women, and the wars produced by capitalism's dog-eat-dog social relations.

When Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez was in New York this fall to address the United Nations General Assembly, he was asked whether the Cuban government, in face of the imposition of hundreds of new U.S. sanctions in recent years, would "negotiate anything with America ever again."

"We will have to," the foreign minister pointed out, as the Cuban government has always done when there's an opening "to reestablish dialogue" on the basis of mutual sovereignty and respect. Cuban diplomatic personnel press for every advance in this direction they can wrench through talks with Washington and other governments regarding the brutal embargo, Cuba's removal from the contemptible "State Sponsors of Terrorism" list, the status of occupied Cuban territory at Guantánamo, migratory issues, drug trafficking and environmental disasters. That's the obligation of the Cuban government to the Cuban people, an obligation they've met with dignity and honor since the first days of the revolution.

The responsibility of the working-class movement and others in this country who defend Cuba's national sovereignty and independence, however, is not the same. It is Washington, which falsely claims to speak in the name of the people of the United States, that has waged a nonstop assault on the Cuban Revolution since 1959. The job of opponents of that reactionary course here in the U.S., unlike the proposals in the *New York Times* ad, must not give an inch, even the tip of a finger, to any encroachment on Cuba's sovereignty.

The revolutionary program, confidence, proletarian conduct, and activity of the Socialist Workers Party have been renewed and strengthened over decades by the steadfastness of Cuban working people and the Cuban government in defending what they've conquered. Both in word and above all in deeds, we will continue getting out the truth about their socialist revolution to working people in the U.S. and wherever else we can reach.

End Washington's economic, trade, financial and diplomatic war against the people of Cuba! Now!